

GRAHAM BIOGRAPHY TO BE REISSUED
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WASHINGTON

A controversial biography of Washington Post board chairman Katharine Graham, which was pulled off bookstore shelves and shredded by a major publisher seven years ago following objections by the Post, is being reissued by a small local publisher.

STAT The revised book seems certain to stir the controversy again, because it states government documents suggesting that Post Executive Editor Benjamin Bradlee, while working as a press attache at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, played a role in what the author terms a CIA "propaganda campaign" against convicted atomic spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in the early 1950s.

Bradlee acknowledged to United Press International that, while working at the embassy, he had written a report to answer French press criticism that the Rosenbergs had been framed, but denied that the CIA had anything to do with his efforts.

Joel Joseph, president of National Press of Bethesda, Md., said the book, "Katharine the Great," by Washington writer Deborah Davis, will be published by his company on May 30, with an initial press run of 10,000. The book was originally published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in late 1979.

After Bradlee wrote a Harcourt Brace editor a critical letter alleging 39 factual errors pertaining to him, the publisher recalled from bookstores and destroyed all unsold copies of the book. Katharine Graham also complained of inaccuracies in the book in a letter to William Jovanovich, company chairman and president.

The book, with a first printing of 25,000, had already been nominated by the publisher for the American Book Awards and had been accepted as a Literary Guild selection. Davis sued Harcourt Brace for breach of contract, and in 1983 received a \$100,000 out-of-court settlement from the publisher.

One of the key items disputed by Bradlee in the original book was the author's contention that, in his work at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, Bradlee had produced unspecified materials for the CIA. The original book said nothing about the Rosenberg case.

Since then, Davis obtained copies of Justice Department documents on the Rosenberg case under the Freedom of Information Act. Several documents containing references to Bradlee are reproduced in the book.

One memorandum, written by one of the prosecutors on Dec. 13, 1952, said that Bradlee had called him that day to say he had just arrived in New York and that he wanted "to look at the Rosenberg file in order to answer the Communist propaganda about the Rosenberg case in the Paris newspapers."

STAT The memo went on to state that Bradlee "further advised that he was sent here by Robert Thayer, who is the head of the CIA in Paris ... He stated that he was supposed to have been met by a representative of the CIA at the airport but missed connections. He has been trying to get in touch with Allen Dulles but has been unable to do so." Dulles was then CIA deputy director; he became director in February 1953.

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In a letter he wrote to a prosecutor four months later, Bradlee said the use of the prosecutors' files had enabled him to produce "most effective counterpropaganda." His letter does not mention the CIA.

In a telephone interview with UPI, Bradlee said Thayer was indeed the CIA station chief in Paris when Bradlee had been there. Bradlee said he had known Thayer since they both attended St. Mark's School, a preparatory school run by Thayer's father.

Bradlee said he had not worked for or with the CIA. He said neither Thayer nor the CIA were involved in his effort to answer criticisms of the Rosenberg case prosecution.

"That wasn't the sort of thing the CIA was interested in," Bradlee said. "I recommended that I go the United States to get information to answer charges that were appearing in the French press that the Rosenbergs were being railroaded."

Bradlee said there was no arrangement for anyone from the CIA to meet him at the airport, and that he did not even know Allen Dulles. He said he did not know why the various references to the CIA were in the prosecutor's memo.

Davis does not allege that Bradlee was employed by the CIA, but rather that he was working in conjunction with the spy agency on the Rosenberg campaign. In an April 1 letter to the author, Bradlee denied "any role in 'the CIA's propaganda campaign'" and said, "All of the allegations about my associations with people in the CIA are as false today as they were when you wrote them."

Joseph, an attorney and author who started National Press three years ago, said his company has published 25 titles, including translations of European books on Holocaust survivors and the rise of a new anti-Semitism in Europe.

He said he and Davis had "carefully examined" the Post's objections to the original book and had made changes "to make this book as accurate as possible." For example, a reference -- denied by Bradlee -- that former CIA Director Richard Helms and Bradlee were boyhood friends, has been deleted, he said.

Davis, 37, a freelance writer, is currently working under a contract with another publisher, E.P. Dutton, Inc., on a book on collaboration with the enemy.